THE HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY OF THE LORD

We who are city dwellers do not study the heavens. We are generally shut up in and among houses and look up and down long electric lighted streets; but when we go out in the country and view the heavens expanding over the earth as a vaulted dome, we obtain a better view, especially if we have the seeing eyes.

Perhaps towards the west we may see a vapory cloud draping as a curtain the couch of the setting sun; perhaps we may see a living fire above the broad expanse of the Pacific; and after that has disappeared, perhaps we may see the new moon a little further up, and a little further up still, Venus, the most beautiful and luminous of all our planets. And then, as we turn around and look further toward the east, we may see how, one after another, the lamps of heaven are lit as the stars of different magnitude appear, and finally we behold a myriad of worlds.

There seems to be no order and no system, and yet, when we look carefully and with understanding, we may see that there are many constellations, and that they move in orderly succession from the east to the west; that the nearer they are to the pole, the more they swing around in an orbit, and as the different stars take different positions at different hours, we may well quote the words of the Psalmist, "The heavens declare the glory of the Lord."

There is something wonderful in that vaulted sky and those fiery blossoms of heaven when we look upon them one after another, as the day disappears and the darkness of night deepens. In the daytime we see only the sun and perhaps on certain days the moon, but at night we are more impressed with the infinitude of space, the vastness of this universe in which we are living, and surely we must realize that there is a ruling power behind it all.

The materialistic science of the middle of the last century started the theory of spontaneous generation—that at some time there appeared in space, spontaneously, a fire-mist, and just as spontaneously, there appeared in that fire-mist currents which sent it spinning; and then, spontaneously also, the centrifugal force threw off rings, and they formed planets which revolved around the central sun, and thus solar system after solar system was formed.

But even Spencer, the great master materialistic thinker of the nineteenth century, could not agree with that nebular theory, for he saw if such a theory as that were true, there must have been behind it all a first cause. He would not believe in a Divine Creator, but he thoroughly understood that there must have been an extraneous cause to have started that fire-mist. The scientists of that day were wont to make an experiment with a little oil, which they stirred in a basin of water to show how the fire-mist would shape itself into a ball and would throw off planets, so they would revolve about the sun, and they tried to make people believe that it was nothing but blind natural law; but Spencer understood that the one who stirred the water represented a first cause, and so we must sometimes believe that behind this vast universe there is a ruling power, or there could not be such orderly expression. If we throw a box of type up in the air, do we expect it to come down in such a way as to spell a beautiful poem? No, we could not, and much less can we expect a mass of atoms, such as was predicated by science at that time, to shape themselves into such orderly forms.

So “the heavens declare the glory of the Lord,” and when we look up into the skies and see all this with our naked eyes, that should be enough to assure us that there must be a great and ruling Being that orders the motion of all these worlds in their orbits; and when we look through a telescope, we see that there are a still greater number of worlds; and the greater the telescope, the more we see that there are worlds upon worlds that are not revealed to the naked eye.

Look up, for instance, at the constellation Orion, the lowest one of those three little stars which form the sword is, as it were, a nebulous mass; nothing will be seen by the naked eye but a nebulous mass, and we may try even such a telescope as the great astronomer Herschel used when he discovered the planet Uranus, but that also will only show a nebula. It is only when we use the greatest telescopes of our own day that we get any satisfaction concerning what is there; and when we see it through such a telescope, we find that it is not a nebula at all, but a solar system such as ours, only many, many times greater.

We are here upon a little planet that we call the earth, and the sun around which it revolves is one million times greater, but such a sun as Arcturus, which we see so far away in the heavens, sheds five hundred times more light than does our sun, and one star in the far distant Pleiades, that are so nebulous as to be scarcely distinguishable to the eyes, is said to shed one hundred million times more light. Our earth spins around upon its axis at the rate of one thousand miles per hour, and it rushes along in its orbit around the sun at the rate of sixty-five thousand miles in the same time. It takes it three hundred sixty-five days to make that revolution; it is part of a solar system, and the solar system in which we live is said to move in an orbit that, it has been calculated, would take eighteen hundred million years to accomplish. Orbit within orbit, and star within star, and so it goes, but “the heavens declare the glory of the Lord,” because they point to the fact that there must be a great and wonderful central source of power that keeps all this going.

And when you and I, dear readers, think that we have accomplished something great, when perhaps we feel vain, and when we go out and look up into that vaulted sky, what is the lesson we learn there? When we compare our own small achievements with what is there in that universe, should it not teach us humility? And if sorrows and troubles visit us, if we feel worried about the little things that happen in our lives, let us just think of that wonderful universe in which we live.

Upon earth there may be sorrow and pain and strife; the tempest may in one hour destroy more than man can build up in centuries; and the eruption of a volcano can in a few seconds destroy a city of millions, and an earthquake can bring great havoc; but when all this has passed, and we look up, the universe has not been moved one particle. The same stars shine above us that have shone above the earth for millenniums. There is immutability there; these stars that move about in their changeless orbits are under an immutable law that holds them steadfast there. We may call that law gravity, or we may call it God, but it is there, and this very immutability—this very fact of the changelessness of the laws—is that which gives us security.

If it were not for that law of gravity, we could not safely leave our homes in the morning and rest assured that we should find them there at night, but because of that law of gravity, which holds everything in its place, they are there when we return. We know that water when evaporated into steam is a force, and that under certain conditions that

force can be used; we depend upon the immutability of the laws of God, and we rest safely in that.

As it is in the universe, so is it with the small things of life. To contemplate those changeless orbits of the stars gives us faith that we are not to be hurled into nothingness; that year after year there will be time for further development, until such time as we have rounded out and enjoyed all the opportunities that are here for us; faith that there is not to be a sudden convulsion of the earth to hurl us into space and make this life count for nothing; faith that everything that is here is under the same immutable law that governs and has governed and held up countless stars in space for millions and millions of years, and then we can thank God that we have been given this opportunity, and that we can have faith to look into the heavens and in that way come nearer to Him.

Mankind in former days always contemplated the heavens with reverence; it is only in these materialistic days that we for a time have forgotten; but we who have been studying the stellar science from a spiritual point of view should realize that just as there is the orbit of the earth around the sun, and also the orbit of the sun around another central sun, so we too have an ever widening orbit. We may at the present time have small opportunities, but it depends upon how we use them whether we shall have greater opportunities in the future, or stay on in the environment that is ours today. If we do not diligently embrace the opportunities here, Nature in her beneficent solicitude takes us off and gives us another chance in another environment; but when we have exhausted the opportunities here on earth, a new environment is given us with greater opportunities.

Those who have received the deeper teachings ought to take especial advantage of all the opportunities for study given here, and appreciate the Rosicrucian teachings, which are the most advanced given to the Western world, and we should also appreciate any opportunity we have to live more useful lives in the world than we see other people living. We should not seek work far afield—it behooves us to do all we can in the environment where we find ourselves to live noble and lofty lives, though also very humble. We should not let the little worries of life overcome us, but aim to let our lights shine in increasingly larger orbits, that we may add luster to the Glory of the Heavens as becomes students of the stellar science.